[English]

Production and Demand of Iron Ore

3556. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have made any assessment of the likely demand and production of iron ore in the country upto 2000 A.D.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any long term plan has been drawn up for increasing its production; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d). As per the report of the Working Group on Iron & Steel Industry for VIII Plan, it is estimated that the requirement of Iron Ore by the Integrated Steel Plants and the sponge iron industry both in public & private sector by 1994-95 would be of the order of 42 million tonnes. However, with the change of 8th Plan period (now 1992-93), these estimates of the Working Group are being revised.

Recently a Task Force on Iron Ore has been constituted in the Ministry of Steel. Among the terms of reference of the Task force are the assessment of the likely demand and availability of iron ore upto 2000 A.D. & augmenting of production of iron ore.

Mini Steel Industries

3557. SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mini steel industries are facing financial crisis; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) It is a fact that production in the mini steel industries has been affected due to the shortage of imported steel melting scrap.

(b) Import of scrap through the canalising agency, Metal Scrap Trade Corporation (MSTC), has reduced this year due to non-availability of adequate free foreign exchange. Efforts are being made to increase imports through MSTC. User industries can also import scrap directly through the use of Exim Scrips.

Upper Thunga Project

3558. SHRIMATI BASVARAJESWARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been made to the Union Government for the inclusion of the Upper Thunga project in Karnataka in the Eighth Five year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (c). Upper Thunga Project Report envisaging an annual irrigation of 94698 hectares and estimated to cost Rs. 271.41 crores was received from the State government in April, 1991 for techno-economic appraisal. On examination, it was found that there were basic deficiencies regarding geo-logical investigations for